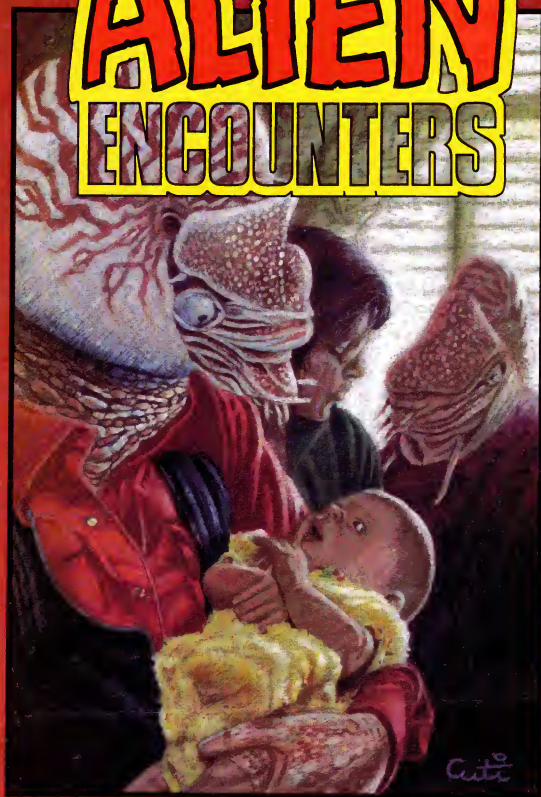
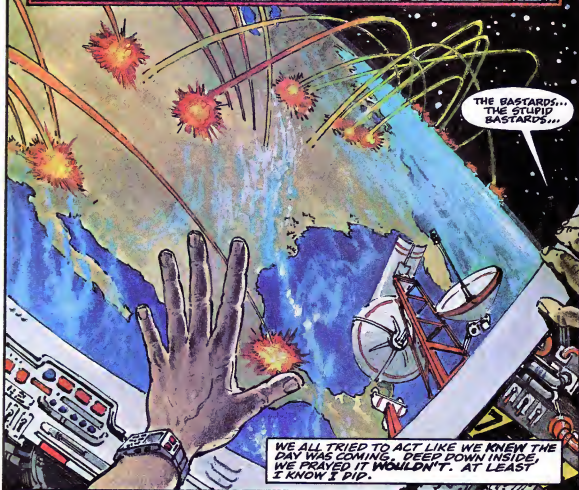


# ALIEN ENCOUNTERS





# The Light at the End

STORY by CHARLES PIXON

ILLUSTRATED by PETER LEDGER · LETTERED by BILL PEARSON

I COULDN'T RAISE ANYONE, THE ELECTRO-MAGNETIC PULSE WAS THE REASON FOR THAT.

ZIP! BUT IT SHOULD CLEAR IN A FEW WEEKS.

SO WHAT? IT'S ALL OVER.

HEY, TAKE IT EASY.

SCREW YOU, CLARKSON! YOU SAW WHAT HAPPENED. BOTH SIDES MADE FULL NUCLEAR STRIKES. IT'S OVER!

AND THE FABULOUS CHRE-ALL SPACE DEFENSE SYSTEM IS ALL PACKED AWAY IN BOXES. SHIT, WE SHOULD HAVE BEEN UP HERE MONTHS AGO.

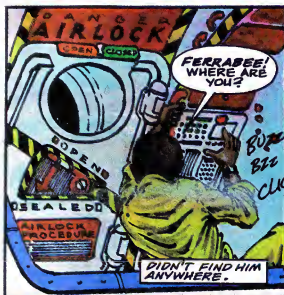
MAYBE THAT'S WHY THEY COMMITTED THEMSELVES NOW... BEFORE WE COULD START UP.

WHO CARES?

I GUESS I SHOULD HAVE EXPECTED WHAT HAPPENED A COUPLE OF DAYS LATER.

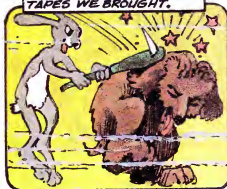
THE AIRLOCK CLAXON?



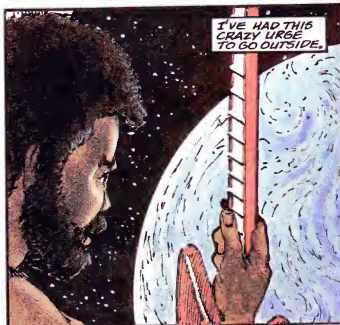
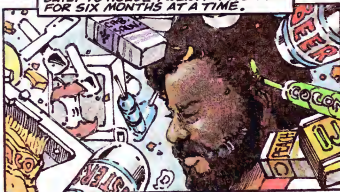


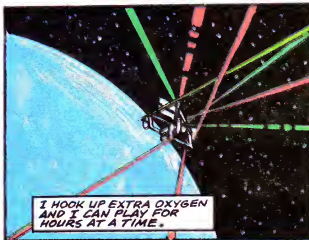
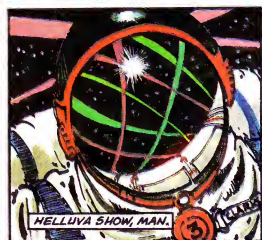
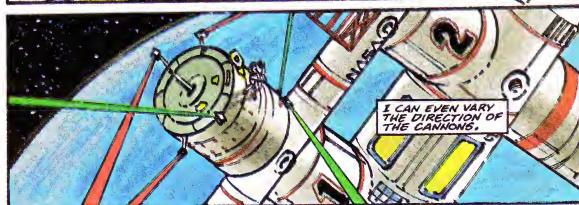
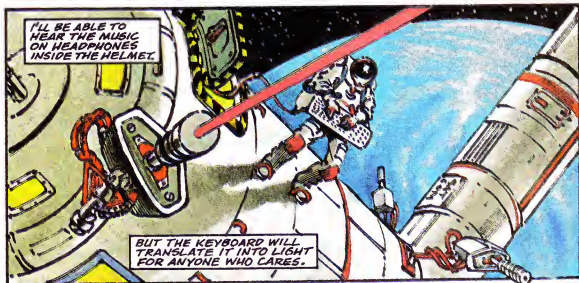


THE ONLY VOICES I HEAR ARE OFF OF THE VIDEO-TAPES WE BROUGHT.



PLENTY OF FOOD, THIS PLACE WAS BUILT TO HOUSE TWENTY-FIVE MEN FOR SIX MONTHS AT A TIME.





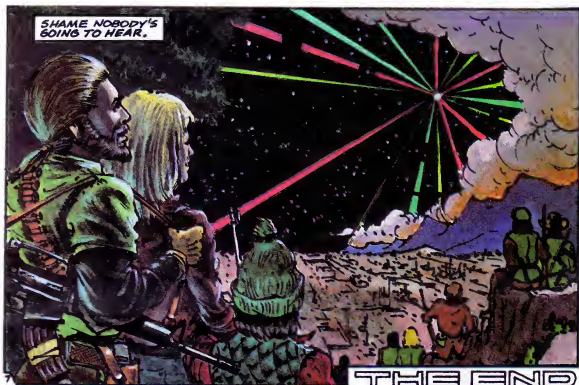




WROTE THAT SONG FOR FERRABEE.  
HAVEN'T THOUGHT OF A NAME  
FOR IT, THOUGH.



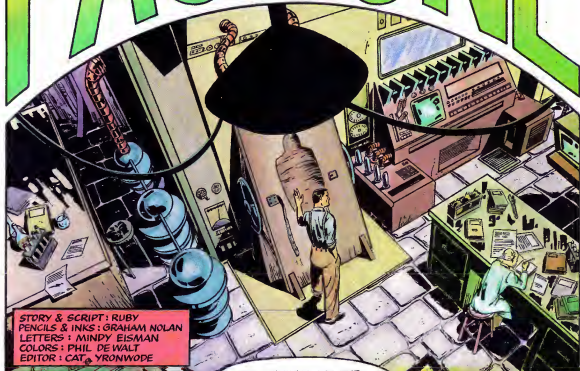
REAL SAP SONG. JUST  
LIKE THE ONE I WROTE  
FOR THE EARTH.



SHAME NOBODY'S  
GOING TO HEAR.

THE END

# PAGE ONE



STORY & SCRIPT: RUBY  
PENCILS & INKS: GRAHAM NOLAN  
LETTERS: MINDY EISMAN  
COLORS: PHIL DE WALT  
EDITOR: CAT, YRONWODE

TWO MINUTES AGO THE  
SOVIET UNION LAUNCHED A  
PRE-EMPTIVE FIRST STRIKE AGAINST  
THE UNITED STATES! WE HAVE  
RETIATED! THE PRESIDENT IS  
PREPARING A STATEMENT -- BUT,  
MEANWHILE, THE FIRST MISSILES  
SHOULD FIND THEIR TARGETS IN  
LESS THAN TWENTY MINUTES...

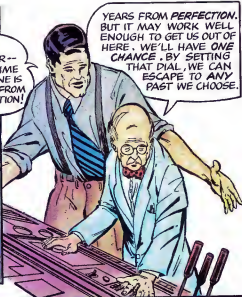
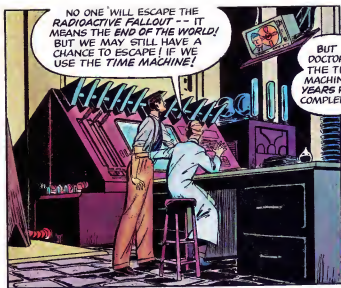
BEEEEEEEE...

ALERT

GOOD LORD,  
DOCTOR ... IT'S  
HAPPENED!

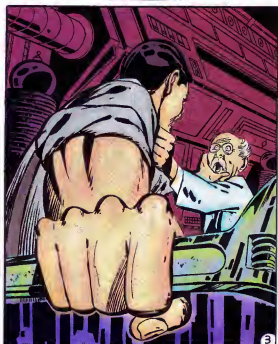
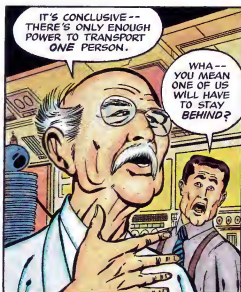
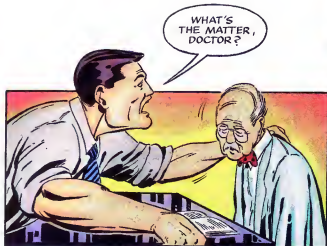
EEEEEEEEEP...





UNFORTUNATELY, DUE TO THE SEQUENCING FUNCTION OF THE HUMAN BRAIN, ALL OUR AWARENESS THAT WE ARE TIME TRAVELLING WILL DISAPPEAR. THAT'S ONE PROBLEM I'VE NEVER SOLVED.



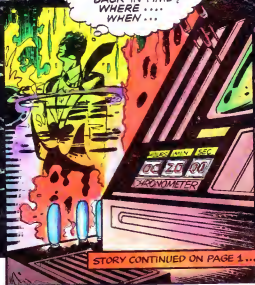




YOU MAY  
BE STUCK HERE  
WAITING FOR  
THE END--  
BUT NOT ME...

CAN'T ...  
REACH IT FROM  
HERE--TOO LATE!  
WHERE AM I GONNA  
GO? HOW FAR  
BACK IN TIME?  
WHERE ...  
WHEN ...

GOOD LORD!  
I FORGOT  
TO SET THE  
TIME  
DIAL!



STORY CONTINUED ON PAGE 1...



"RICK'S PLACE" -- A SMALL DIN-  
BRASS MODELED  
AFTER AN ANCIENT  
PIECE OF TRIPS  
CALLED "CASA-  
BLANCA", WHICH  
WAS RECORDED  
ON AN OBSCURE  
PLANET TRASHED  
A LONG AGO BY A  
NOMADIC BAND OF  
CARNIVOROUS  
SPACE PIRATES.

"THE OWNER, RICK  
(REAL NAME  
"KLAH-TIK'CHOK"),  
TENDS BAR WHEN  
HE ISN'T  
DESPERATELY  
TRYING EITHER  
TO IMITATE  
HUMPHREY BOGART  
(NOT AN EASY  
THING FOR AN  
INSECTOID)...

"...OR FORCE THE  
CUSTOMERS TO  
PARTICIPATE IN  
THE BAR'S  
MOTIF.

WHAT DO YOU \*TIK\* MEAN, YOU NEVER  
HEARD OF 'CASA-CHINA-BLANCA'?

"...YES  
OUR UNCLE ABE'S  
A-LVIN' REALLY  
PALE IN HIS  
GRAVE..."

AND THE WINE ABOVE IS FLOWIN' LIKE A  
WHITE-AND-BUBBLY WAVE! P.P.

"AND MY NAME?  
IT'S 'SAM' AS  
LONG AS I WANT  
TO KEEP MY  
JOB--I'M THE  
KEYBOARD  
PLAYER.

LET'S DRINK IT ALL, LET'S DRINK  
IT FAST, LET'S MAKE THE NEXT  
VERSE RHYME!

THE MIDGET  
and  
The EYEBALL  
NOW PLAYING:  
BART-ART-  
COURTNEY  
"COLOR"  
Rick's  
Cafe Am

"ANYWAY, THERE WAS A  
PARTY AT ONE END OF THE  
ROOM--PEOPLE WERE  
SINGING OLD FAVORITES  
LIKE 'UNCLE ABE'S GRAVE' AND  
'DATE BUMP BLUES', AND EVERY-  
BODY WAS HAVING A  
GOOD TIME..."

YOU DON'T  
KNOW HOW LUCKY  
YOU ARE.

"WE'LL MAKE  
OURSELVES AS  
STIFF AS HIM,  
IT WAS THE OL'  
BOY'S TIME!"

"THAT IS, MOST  
EVERYONE WAS."

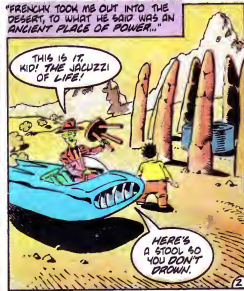
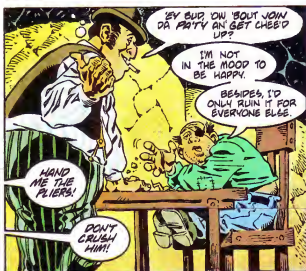
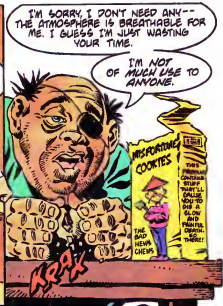
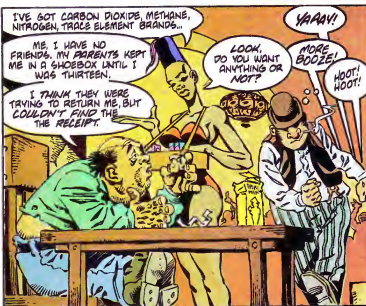
YOU'VE GOT  
PLENTY OF FRIENDS,  
YOU HAVE A JOB  
WHERE YOU GET TO  
MEET NEW  
PEOPLE.

YEAH,  
RIGHT.

WOULD  
YOU LIKE SOME  
CIGARETTES?

"AND SO ♪  
WE SING 'FAREWELL,'  
'GOODBYE!', A SMILE  
UPON OUR BREATH--

♪ NO BETTER  
CAUSE TO CELEBRATE  
THAN SOMEONE ELSE'S  
DEATH!"

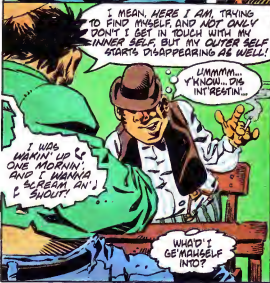


"...SO I STOOD THERE, IN THE JACUZZI OF LIFE, AWAITING THE MOMENT WHEN THE ASCENSION OF THE SUN WOULD CAUSE THE WATERS OF THE JACUZZI TO ARISE AND CLEANSE ME, ILLUMINATING ME WITH ULTIMATE AWARENESS OF SELF."

"THEN IT HAPPENED! THE SUN'S VIRGIN RANG THRUST UPON THE WATERS AND I CRIED OUT..."



\*TRANSLATION: "I AM ALONE IN THE DESERT AND I HAVE JUST LEARNED THAT MY EYEBALL IS MISSING."



UMMMM... Y'KNOW... DIS INT'RESTIN'...

I WAS WAKIN' UP ONE MORNIN' AND I WANNA SCREAM AN' SHOUT.

WHAT'D I GE'MA'HSSELF INTO?



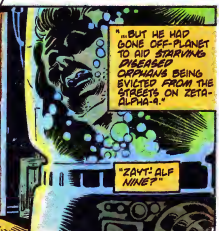
I \*TAKK\* CAME TO DENINGRASS \*HUKK\* FOR THE WATERS.

P. MY CLOCK WAS MOVIN' BACKWARDS...

HUH?

P. AND 'FADIN' IN AN' OUT!

WHEN I GOT BACK TO THE CITY I LOOKED FOR FRENCHY...

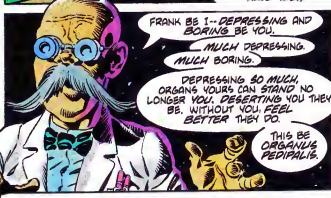
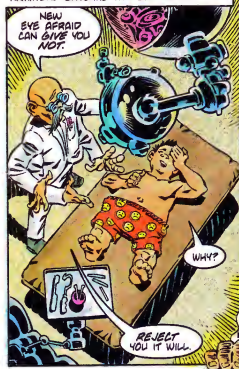


"ZAYT" ALF NINE?"





"AFTER A THOROUGH EXAMINATION, DOCTOR HAMMOND GAVE ME THE BAD NEWS..."



"WELL, THAT WAS IT-- THE DOC GAVE ME A PRESCRIPTION FOR ORGAN BLUE SO THE REST OF ME WOULD STICK TOGETHER--BUT THE VERY THOUGHT GOT ME DOWN..."



"...NOW EVEN MY OWN ORGANS WERE REJECTING ME!"



"I DRANK MYSELF INTO OBLIVION!"





"THEN IT HAPPENED!  
I SAW THEM!"



"WOMEN!! FABULOUS  
WOMEN!"



"GORGEOUS  
WOMEN!!"



"VOLUPTUOUS  
WOMEN!!!"

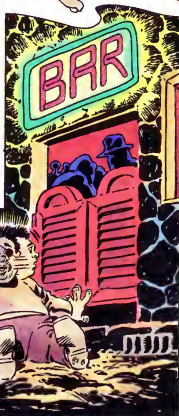
"LOTS OF WOMEN!!!!  
WOMEN WHO ORDINARILY  
WOULDN'T EVEN GIVE ME  
A SECOND GLANCE  
EXCEPT TO AIM SPIT!"



"YET HERE THEY  
WERE, ACTING AS  
IF THEY WANTED  
ME AND REALLY  
ENJOYED MY  
COMPANY!"



"I WOKE UP TO  
GREET THEM..."



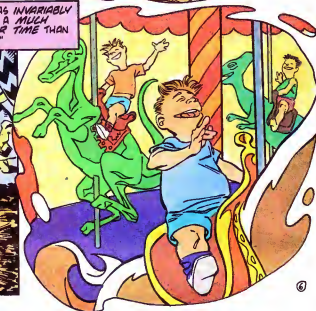
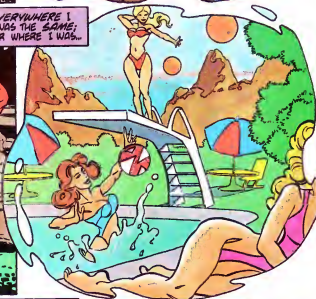
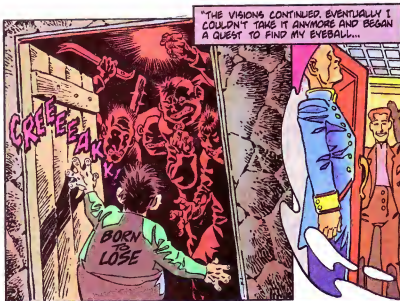
"I HAD BEEN SEEING THROUGH  
MY LOST EYEBALL! NOT ONLY  
DID IT HAVE THE BALL TO  
LEAVE ME, BUT IT WAS ALSO  
ENJOYING THE COMPANY OF  
WOMEN WHOM I COULD NEVER  
EVEN HOPE TO ASSOCIATE WITH  
MYSELF!"



"...BUT THEY WEREN'T  
THERE."

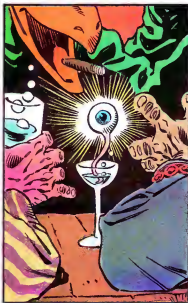
"THEY HAD SEEMED  
SO REAL... THEN  
IT HIT ME..."

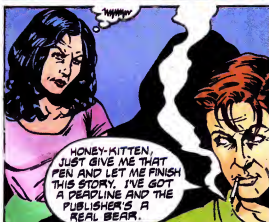




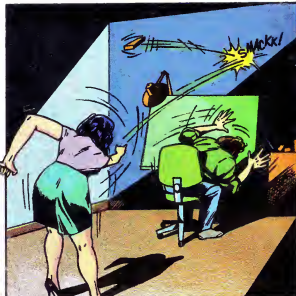






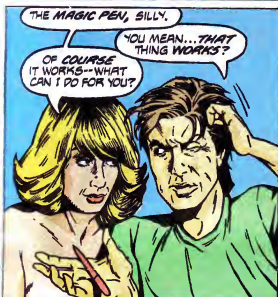
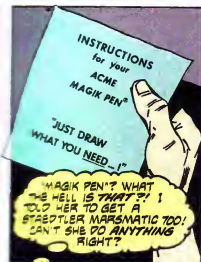






POOR RANDALL--HIS LIFE IS FALLING APART, ISN'T IT? BUT SOMETIMES FROM THE DEEPEST PITS OF DESPAIR MAY COME AN UNEXPECTED SOLUTION...



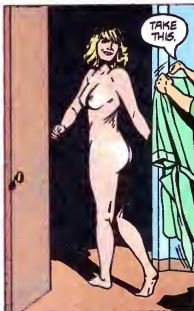




HER NAME'S MYANA.  
GET TO BE FRIENDS.

YOU'LL  
HIT IT  
OFF RIGHT  
AWAY.

WHAT  
ABOUT  
CLOTHES?



TAKE  
THIS.



LATER ON, I'LL THINK  
OF ANOTHER ASSIGNMENT  
FOR HER.

RIGHT  
NOW, LET'S  
GET THESE  
PAGES  
DONE...

RANDALL SEEM TO HAVE  
SOLVED HIS PROBLEMS,  
HASN'T HE? WELL...NOT  
QUITE!



A FEW DAYS LATER...

WHEN ARE  
YOU GOING  
TO GET A  
JOB?

I DON'T  
HAVE TIME  
FOR THIS.

DRAWING  
PICTURES ALL THE  
TIME ISN'T FAIR  
TO US.

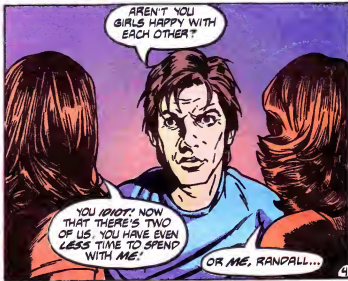


YOU CREEP!  
IS SHE ANOTHER  
ONE OF YOUR  
BRIGHT IDEAS?

HONEY-- I  
JUST THOUGHT  
YOU NEEDED COMPANY  
WHILE I WORK.



BUT, RANDALL--WE CAN'T  
GO ON SHARING ONE BATH-  
ROOM IN A TWO BEDROOM  
APARTMENT!



AREN'T YOU  
GIRLS HAPPY WITH  
EACH OTHER?

YOU IDIOT! NOW  
THAT THERE'S TWO  
OF US, YOU HAVE EVEN  
LESS TIME TO SPEND  
WITH ME!

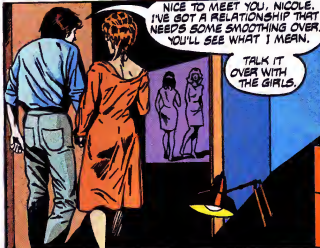
OR ME, RANDALL...







I'M A COUNSELLOR WITH A PhD FROM YALE IN EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY. I'D BE WORKING ON MY BOOK IF YOU HADN'T INTERRUPTED ME.



NICE TO MEET YOU, NICOLE. I'VE GOT A RELATIONSHIP THAT NEEDS SOME SMOOTHING OVER. YOU'LL SEE WHAT I MEAN.

TALK IT OVER WITH THE GIRLS.

PRETTY SMART ON RANDALL'S PART, EH? WELL, NOT EXACTLY...

A SHORT TIME LATER...

RANDALL, WE FEEL THAT YOU SHOULD CHANGE. SABINA, TELL RANDALL HOW YOU FEEL.

YOU'RE NEGLECTING US.

YEAH--WE CAN'T HELP BUT RESSENT YOU, YOU SLOB!

WHY SHOULD WE STAY HERE AND TAKE THIS?

MYRNA'S RIGHT--YOU'RE JUST NOT GIVING ENOUGH, RANDALL.

